

# The Ohio Novel #1 Is Done! (Or what it's like to disappear into a black box)

By Holly Lisle

I wrapped up my final draft yesterday.

In spite of best efforts, I came in over my 90,000K wordcount by about 12,000 words.

I don't have a title for the novel yet (Matt comes up with my best titles, and I'm really hoping he can pull out something amazing, both for the first book and for the entire series).

I do have my pseudonym. I can't give either until – BARE MINIMUM – the first five books are out and starting to find their audience.

And then I'll only be giving it to the folks on my mailing list who are genuinely interested in the genre.

Since I'm publishing the Ohio series independently, since I'm bringing the series and world (with possible subsequent series) out under a pseudonym, and since I have to plot the next four novels, then have to complete the entire 5-book series – have all five written, revised, edited, bug-hunted, formatted, covered with pro-quality covers, and get them all up into Amazon-exclusive KDP and print formats, and then launch them at the speed of one book a month for five months, I have a long, long way to go.

But... THIS TIME, I'm trying to work with Amazon's algorithms, and see what I can learn from doing that.

**It's an investment in manpower.** A BIG one – primarily but not exclusively mine. We're talking the time, effort, focus,

dedication, that goes into thinking and then writing 400,000+ MORE connected, related, compelling words of fiction that must be outlined, first-drafted, finished, revised, edited, bug-hunted, typeset, put into Kindle, print, and other formats (the Ohio novels will start Amazon-exclusive, but probably won't stay that way past the completion of the initial five-book launch) have cover copy written and tested and re-written, have title testing – so I'm talking about an all-in commitment of a big chunk of my life, with no feedback (except from Matt, Becky, and my bug hunters) until this whole thing goes live.

It's also an investment in money: All mine. Just the cash outlay for five great, professional covers, is significant. But much, much more expensive than that is opportunity cost – the things I don't get paid for because of the time and effort I'm putting into this project that I *hope* I might get paid for... that isn't a new writing class or a couple of classes I KNOW I could get paid for.

If it goes big for me, THEN my writing students will get my numbers and how I did it, along with this really cool story development process I've come up with and am using for these. Maybe some workshops.

If it doesn't go big for me, they'll get the really cool story development process... but that's not a cool new workshop that might be able to give writers willing to do the work (as outlined above, so we're talking BRAVE writers) a path to building a live-on fiction income. The story development thing is just a few lessons. Probably added into an existing class or two.

And here's the thing that's making me a little nuts.

The entire process has to be done completely in the dark. I have to build EVERYTHING, pay for EVERYTHING, set up EVERYTHING, write EVERYTHING, and publish EVERYTHING... with

nobody but Matt, Becky, and myself seeing what I'm doing. (Well, at the point where I'm ready for bug-hunters, I already have a couple lined up, and will bring in a few more, and this handful of readers will go through all five novels back to back to back. And sign an NDA beforehand that they can't tell anyone who I am, or what my pseudonym is, or where the website is, or anything. Not until the books are doing so well that I can bring in my other genre-related fiction to the new writer under a "written as Holly Lisle" label with the pseudonym as the author name.

I can't share snippets of any of the Ohio stuff – not snippets or scenes or teaser stuff or worldbuilding – on my blog, on the podcast, in the writing community forum. Nothing.

I can't put links to the books when they come out here or in the writing community or on the podcast page.

I can't link my old novels to this new set.

I have to become invisible.

Not my strong suit.

But for this test to mean anything, for this process to mean anything, this is where I am.

At some point in the future, I hope to be able to share some crazy great news. Or at least, "Hey, I'm making enough to pay off the house." That would be really cool.

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# The Ohio Series: Writing this one works differently

By Holly Lisle

I mentioned that I'm going to have a different pseudonym for the Ohio series books (and I have real titles and a real series title for this project) – but all of that is staying under wraps until after I start bringing out the books and letting them find their readers.

But this is an odd project for me in another way, too.

I'm also writing these differently. I'm sort of collaborating with Matt – I'm doing the writing, but...

I'm printing off each chapter as I finish it, and putting it on Matt's desk. He's making notes in the margins, and I'm going back the next day and making changes the next day based on his comments, and then adding new stuff.

Well, we're only on day two, so that's how I think it'll end up working.

This is something new for both of us, and yesterday he read what I'd printed off for him, and then thought about it, and we ended up having a long talk about the intro, the world, the worldbuilding, the main character, the magic...

Fun, in places really moving... we're both pulling from deeply personal parts of our lives on this project. And what he brought to it yesterday gave me something so strong this morning that I ended up making myself cry as I was writing.

But I was pulling stuff out as quickly as I was putting stuff in. And at the end of two hours and change of writing, I was down a net 63 words. So this morning my little image shows a negative number.

Positive changes in the story, though. Something a lot better to build on in the weeks to come.

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# Why I shut down my Patreon fundraiser

By Holly Lisle

I'd intended to send a *Questions & Answers* email to my *How to Write a Novel* launch list, but that's going to have to wait. Instead, I did THIS.

## Closed my "Move out of Florida while writing fiction" fundraiser.

Here's why – it's this clause in the Patreon Legal Agreement

<https://www.patreon.com/legal>

*By posting content to Patreon you grant us a royalty-free, perpetual, irrevocable, non-exclusive, sublicensable, worldwide license to use, reproduce, distribute, perform, publicly display or prepare derivative works of your content.*

Understand that I read that clause and all the rest of them before signing up.

BUT... I'm not a lawyer, and I understood that clause to mean that Patreon was claiming the right to use my Patreon-created content (in other words, my POSTS) to promote the site.

I DID NOT think that they were claiming the right to use and abuse the content I was giving my patrons. In this case, three monthly chapters of the raw first draft of one of my current novels in progress, Dead Man's Party.

A friend emailed me with a link to this post, however:

<https://www.thepassivevoice.com/the-beginning-of-the-end-for-patreon/>

Turns out, I was wrong. Patreon is claiming rights to my novel.

So I'm out. I sent the first copy of this email to my patrons using a private Patreon post, and then I shut down my Patreon fundraiser, and am now trying to figure out how to actually close my account.

I'm not letting this kill my dream of moving us out of Florida...

...(hopefully before the next hurricane, if not the start of the hurricane season).

## **How you can help, if you want to –**

### **IF YOU'RE HERE AS A WRITER:**

I have created original classes ranging from under ten dollars to way over a hundred. If one of the classes I offer could help you, then you buying it would help me.

## **MY COMPREHENSIVE CAREER-LEVEL CLASSES (in recommended order)**

### **\*\*\* How to Write a Novel \*\*\***

<http://hollyswritingclasses.com/class/how-to-write-a-novel.html>

***(IN LAUNCH: On sale ONLY through Tuesday APRIL 8 – Final***

***Discount Launch)***

**How to Revise Your Novel:**

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/how-to-revise-your-novel.html>

**How to Write a Series:**

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/how-to-write-a-series.html>

**How to Think Sideways: Career Survival School for Writers:**

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/how-to-think-sideways.html>

**WRITING CRAFT SERIES (Each class is under \$10)**

**Create a Character Clinic:**

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/characterclinic.html>

**Create A Plot Clinic:**

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/plotclinic.html>

**How to Write Page-Turning Scenes:**

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/pageturningscenes.html>

**WORLDBUILDING SERIES (Each class is under \$10)**

**Create A Language Clinic:**

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/languageclinic.html>

**Create a Culture Clinic:**

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/cultureclinic.html>

**Create a World Clinic:**

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/worldclinic.html>

## **WORKSHOPS & MID-SIZED CLASSES (PRICES VARY)**

### **How to Write Short Stories:**

<http://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/how-to-write-short-stories-class.html>

### **How to Write Villains:**

<http://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/how-to-write-villains.html>

### **How to Write Dialogue with Subtext:**

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/dialogue-subtext.html>

### **Title Cover Copy Marketing Basics:**

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/titlecovercopy.html>

### **How to Find Your Writing Discipline:**

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/writingdiscipline.html>

### **How to Find Your Writing Voice:**

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/writing-voice.html>

### **How to Motivate Yourself:**

<http://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/motivate-yourself.html>

### **Beat Writer's Block:**

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/beatwritersblock.html>

*FREE, INCLUDED WITH (also Free) SITE MEMBERSHIP*

### **How to Write Flash Fiction That Doesn't Suck**

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/free-flash-fiction-class.h>



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### **IF YOU'RE HERE AS A READER:**

You can help out by buying some of my indie-published fiction.

### **SHORT STUFF, CURRENTLY AMAZON ONLY:**

#### **Light Through Fog:**

<https://www.amazon.com/Light-Through-Holly-Lisle-Singles-ebook/dp/B0096F4HY0/>

#### **Rewind:**

<https://www.amazon.com/Rewind-Holly-Lisle-Singles-Book-ebook/dp/B00AY10HAE/>

#### **Strange Arrivals:**

<https://www.amazon.com/Strange-Arrivals-Twisty-Fantasy-Tales-ebook/dp/B00E0WMYRW/>

### **FANTASY – ARHEL TRILOGY**

#### **Fire in the Mist:**

<https://books2read.com/FireInTheMist>

#### **Bones of the Past:**

<https://books2read.com/BonesOfThePast>

#### **Mind of the Magic:**

<https://books2read.com/MindOfTheMagic>

### **DARK SCIENCE FICTION-ISH**

#### **SETTLED SPACE**

**Both of the Cadence Drake novels** – *Hunting the Corrigan's Blood* and *Warpaint*, are off sale while I come up with new titles and new cover art for them, and new key words, descriptions, and other marketing that allows me to correctly put them in front of the audience that likes a few vampires and a bit of horror with its spaceships.

**The Longview Chronicles** (complete Series) is in the same universe – still dark, but without the vampires:

<https://books2read.com/longview-chronicles>

**Or you can get the individual stories:**

**Born from Fire:**

<https://books2read.com/born-from-fire>

**Suzee Delight:**

<https://books2read.com/the-selling-of-suzee-delight>

**Philosopher Gambit:**

<https://books2read.com/the-philosopher-gambit>

**Gunslinger Moon:**

<https://books2read.com/gunslinger-moon>

**Vipers' Nest:**

<https://books2read.com/vipers-nest>

**The Owner's Tale:**

<https://books2read.com/the-owners-tale>

## **STANDALONE URBAN FANTASY**

**Minerva Wakes:**

<https://books2read.com/minerva-wakes>

## **PARANORMAL SUSPENSE**

### **Author Page:**

<https://books2read.com/ap/xbzgyx/Kate-Aeon>

### **Midnight Rain:**

<https://books2read.com/midnight-rain>

### **Last Girl Dancing:**

<https://books2read.com/last-girl-dancing>

### **I See You:**

<https://books2read.com/i-see-you>

I have much more fiction that's commercially published, or which is out of print and has reverted to me, but which I have not yet republished.

I'm not linking to ANY of that fiction, because your purchase of used books or books where publishers haven't paid royalties in years will not help me.

## **So there we are.**

**I want to thank all my patrons again, and I am so sorry that I had to do this, but there is no way I can permit this:**

## **Excerpted from Patreon Legal Terms**

*You keep full ownership of all content that you post on Patreon, but to operate we need licenses from you.*

*By posting content to Patreon you grant us a royalty-free, perpetual, irrevocable, non-exclusive, sublicensable,*

*worldwide license to use, reproduce, distribute, perform, publicly display or prepare derivative works of your content.*

## **No. Just NO. Holly**

**P.S.** I have had one of my Patreon patrons already ask me how she could continue to support me on a monthly basis.

**Here's the answer I gave her:**

*"I'll look into what's available. Right now, I'm crushed to discover the rights Patreon actually claimed, and worried about getting involved with any other site. So I'm in limbo. You'll find my blog at HollyLisle.com. I'll be keeping my folks there up to date on how I deal with this. It sucks.*

*Hugs, and thank you for asking."*

## **Why is EVERYBODY on my blog, my mailing list, and in my forums getting this?**

**Because if you know me, you're probably either a reader or a writer.** If you're a writer, you may be considering using Patreon, and you need to know. If you're a reader considering funding someone on Patreon, THEY need to know.

And this is the ugliest, broadest rights-grab I have personally ever seen. Or sadly, been caught up in.

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# Dead Man's Party: How'd you like your brain sanded, writer...?

By Holly Lisle

This morning I rolled into work pretty sure I knew what I was going to do.

And hit my novel of the day, *Dead Man's Party*, with a sort of "Have not had my coffee yet, but I'll get this anyway" focus.

Read my short description of the chapter I'd scheduled to write, and realized several weeks' distance from my provisional outline, and a week away from the actual book, that I'd managed to misidentify the right ending for the novel as Chapter 22 out of thirty-something planned chapters.

Putting your ending into the book before the book ends means that everything else is going to be a let-down – anticlimactic, and kind of lame.

NOT the experience you ever want your reader to have.

THIS meant I had to drag the placeholder for that chapter to its proper space at the end of the novel (thanks, Scrivener, for ease of repair). And then I had to move a previously-planned chapter into the empty space that hole created, and come up with an interesting conflict for that location and that character than I had not yet considered.

Since I'm doing videos all my chapters of *Dead Man's Party*, I captured the whole struggle with chapter 22, including brainstorming the idea I needed to show the character dealing with a problem I had not previously addresses, and also managed to capture the fact that when I stopped writing for the day, I thought I'd missed writing the chapter ending.

When I was doing the print versions for my students and putting the pieces together for the *How to Write a Novel class* for which I'm creating this novel, I realized I would only need one line to finish the chapter.

I'll do that next week, though. Because while I know it's enable with one line, I haven't yet thought up the right line. By the time this has had a week to perk, I'll be able to throw in a nice twist.

Today I wrote 1622 words – only needed 1515.

And in spite of the fact that getting started felt like having my brain sanded – I swear I could smell plastic burning when I was scrambling to fix the problems I'd created by misidentifying my ending and having to come up with a better conflict for my main character – by the time I finished, I liked what I got on the novel this week.

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# Rediscovered Worldbuilding Workshop: Holidays in Hell and Other Delights

By Holly Lisle

I was doing a BIG search on my hard drive for something I'd previously written about Tangerine, who was a minor character in *Hunting the Corrigan's Blood* who became a major character in the current novel, *The Wishbone Conspiracy* (for which as I blog this, I have not yet gotten my full complement of words

for the day...

When I tripped over a handful of old workshops and articles I'd written for *Vision*, back when Lazette Gifford was editing and publishing that as part of my Forward Motion site.

Most of them are already in place on the writing pages.

But one of the ones I hadn't yet reprinted was *Holidays in Hell and Other Delights: A Worldbuilding Workshop*.

I got a wee bit sidetracked with that, and am now getting back to my fiction, STILL not having recovered a big chunk of writing I did on the novel that actually featured Tangerine (that isn't his real name, by the way).

I put that up so I wouldn't forget it, and am posting here so you won't miss it. I was pleased that the quality still held up – it'll be useful for those of you who write fiction and need to build in some little pieces of worlds to give them added depth and verisimilitude.

The link again: *Holidays in Hell and Other Delights: A Worldbuilding Workshop*

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# The How to Write a Novel Lesson Sampler – Part Two

By Holly Lisle

So as promised, here's the second Lesson Sampler from my in-progress *How to Write a Novel* class.

I'll note that:

- **Registration for the class closes tomorrow night at 11:59 PM Eastern Time, and that...**
- This is the only time *How to Write a Novel* will be available for the Early-Bird price. When registration reopens sometime next year, the price will go up significantly.

*Necessary info out of the way, though, here's your download.*

## The How To Write A Novel Sampler: Part 2



**This is not an overview of the course lessons.**

This is the first 7-9 pages of each of the second seven lessons of the course. This sampler does NOT include worksheets, demos, videos, or the forum, of course. It's JUST the first part of each lesson.

As long as you leave the material in its existing form (including the PDF format), you're welcome to share this



course sampler with anyone you like.

Download your excerpts from the second seven lessons of **How to Write a Novel**.

Download Now!

759 Downloads

I hope you find this helpful with your own novel writing.

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# The How to Write a Novel Lesson Sampler – Part One

By Holly Lisle

Sometimes it's tough to explain what a class is, how it works, why it isn't like every other class out there.

Sometimes (well, most times) it's a lot easier to SHOW...

So in this **PART 1** demo of my *How to Write a Novel* class, I've taken the first 7 to 9 pages of each of the first seven lessons, exactly as they are in the live class.

This includes typos – and I need to mention that because I'm currently writing this class one lesson ahead of the first group of students, at a pace of one lesson per week, and I

don't at the moment have time to go back and fix typos.

All the students in my classes get all in-version updates of their classes at no extra charge – and the folks in first get a better price, because they know there are going to be splinters – typos, places where I could have done better showing them how to do something.

Once I finish the whole class in this version, I'll go back through it with a group of students who will help me find all the bugs, and I'll fix it. And when that's done, it'll will become the finished version, at the finished-course price.

Because PDFs hang around forever, you may receive this PDF after that process is complete.

But perhaps not. In either case, I apologize for the typos, the little grammar misses, and the other errors that come with publishing raw first draft.

I hope you find the content helpful in showing you part of what you'll need to know to write novels well.

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Download your excerpts from the first seven lessons of **How to Write a Novel**.

Download Now!

1183 Downloads

# Holly Lisle's *How to Write a Novel*

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## Alone in a Room with Invisible People: Our New Podcast

By Holly Lisle

My daughter Rebecca and I get together every Sunday to talk. Knit. Show our goofy cats to each other.

We do this online, because we currently live about 600 miles apart.

**But we also talk about writing. A lot.**

And at one point a couple months ago, we were having this really animated discussion and bouncing ideas around on the book she was working on, and she said, "You know, I wish other people could be a part of the writing stuff we talk about."

And a week or so after that, she said, "You know, you could do a podcast, and I could produce it for you."

And I said, "I already did a podcast once, and it died an ugly death because I got sick of listening to myself talk."

But I agreed that it would be really cool if all the stuff we were discussing about our fiction, and about writing fiction could be saved for folks to listen to.

An then *I* had an idea, and a week after that, I said, “I figured out the podcast. It’ll be both of us talking to each other about writing. About what we’re writing, and about how it’s going, and about how to do it better.

“Because I’ve been doing this for years, but you just finished your first real revision on your first serious *written with intent to publish* novel. So while you’ve sold your shorter work, you’re at the beginning of pursuing a career as a novelist, and I’ve done that both commercially and as an indie. So with both of us in there, it will have BOTH our perspectives.”

And the week after that, we started setting things up, and last week, we did the podcast intro, and the first show.

**We get together every week.**

**We talk.**

**A lot.**

And for an hour or so each week, we’ll be talking exclusively about what we’re writing, how we’re writing it, answering listener questions about your writing or our fiction (yes, you HAVE met the *Longview’s* owner in both *Hunting the Corrigan’s Blood* and *Warpaint*)... doing what we did in the first full episode.

You can be a part of our lively conversations about how our own fiction is coming, about writing fiction, and about how to do it better.

**(To maintain sound quality, and to be able to eliminate some of my worst spirals downward into Spectacular Swearing, we will NOT be broadcasting live...)**

**Whether you’re a reader, a writer, or both, you’ve invited to sit in, listen to what we discuss, and leave questions about our fiction or about writing fiction on our blog, *Alone in a***

*Room with Invisible People.*

**I hope you'll join us every week – and if you love the show,** please take a moment to rate us on iTunes and elsewhere, subscribe to the podcast, and to share us with other folks.

### **Our Website:**

<https://www.aiarwip.com/>

<https://www.alonewithinvisiblepeople.com/>

<https://www.aloneinaroomwithinvisiblepeople.com/>

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**Stitcher:** <https://www.stitcher.com/podcast/rebecca-galardo/alone-in-a-room-with-invisible-people>

**PodBean:** <https://hollylisle.podbean.com>

### **Social Links**

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Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/alonewithinvisiblepeople/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/aiarwip>

**HollysWritingClasses:** <https://hollyswritingclasses.com/>

**Holly's Patreon:** <https://www.patreon.com/hollylisle/>

**Holly's Personal Page:** <https://www.hollylisle.com/>

**Holly's Blog:** <https://hollylisle.com/weblog/>

**Rebecca's Personal Page:** <https://www.rebeccagalardo.com/>

**Rebecca's Writing Blog:**

<https://rebeccagalardowords.wordpress.com/>

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# Vipers' Nest is live

By Holly Lisle

The book went live about a week, week and a half ago. Maybe longer?

I've been buried in getting the HollysWritingClasses.com site done, getting the affiliate program live, and it has been wall-to-wall, morning to night work for the last couple weeks.

So while I did remember to publish the story, I missed mentioning my own book launch. Anywhere. To anyone. <beating head on desk>

**But this time I went wide**, and part of what I've been doing was taking as much of the rest of my stuff wide as I could.

So here are the WIDE links (which means you can find these books in a bunch of different stores for the first time).

## Longview 1-5 IN ORDER:

**Born from Fire:** <https://books2read.com/born-from-fire>

**Suzee**

**Delight:**

<https://books2read.com/the-selling-of-suzee-delight>

**Philosopher**

**Gambit:**

<https://books2read.com/the-philosopher-gambit>

**Gunslinger Moon:** <https://books2read.com/gunslinger-moon>

**NEW! Vipers' Nest:** <https://books2read.com/vipers-nest>

If you read it and love it, I'd deeply appreciate a review on your bookstore of choice.

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# Vipers' Nest Homestretch – I hope...

By Holly Lisle

So... here it is Friday morning, July 6, and I have been working steadily for six hours a day on the bug-hunts for Vipers' Nest every day but Monday...

Granted, as I'm getting into the bug hunts from my later folks, I'm getting a lot of repeat finds.

But I have not had one bug hunter who hasn't found at least half a dozen "uniques" – errors no one else spotted. And I've had several readers who have asked smart and thoughtful questions that required me to rethink and rework portions of the story.

Result?

The story was about 32,000 words in finished revised "final" draft. Before I touch it this morning, it's already 38,473 words. If I end up adding a smidge over 1500 more words, the damn thing becomes a novel.

***And I still have five bug hunters to go.***

I've been pulling out words, too, but they're losing ground to the ones I'm adding.

Why?

Because the writer who gets an intelligent question about something in the story that isn't answered (because the writer assumed prior knowledge) cannot ignore the question by saying, "Well, to find that out, you have to read the previous



stories.”

## Because here's reality.

The reader *doesn't* have to read the previous stories. The reader can go read someone else's stories that don't assume prior knowledge.

So as lightly as I can, I'm including the tidbits of prior knowledge readers would need to bring in from the previous four stories, WITHOUT tipping off the reader to what happens in those stories.

The fun part of this is that, because of the way I plot, I can put in some things that some characters believe to be true (even though other characters know they are not true) so that I'm not cheating in hiding details while still making sure I don't spoil the earlier stories for readers who DO go through them out of order.

But it's slow and careful work, and what I thought I was going to fly through in a day or two is now at the end of my second week of doing just the story ALMOST full time.

And I already know that I'm going to have to go through this when I'm done, read it out loud, and do a final *Bug-Hunt* bug-hunt to eliminate new errors I've introduced.

You'll be getting a better and richer story out of this. Just not this week.

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